GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES AND MINERALS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2248
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2000
ILLEGAL MINING OF DIAMONDS
SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL

Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether illegal mining for diamonds is rampant in Surat and areas around in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa;

(b) if so, the estimated loss suffered as a result thereof during 1998-99, and 1999-2000, State-wise;

(c) the steps taken to prevent such mining;

(d) whether fresh explorations for diamond reserves especially in the Golkonda region have been made; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which the promise of yielding further diamond reserves has been fulfilled?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS, SPORTS AND MINES (SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA)

(a) to (c): The State Governments are responsible for checking illegal mining of minerals including diamonds. To strengthen the hands of the State Governments to curb illicit mining, during the recent amendments in the Mines & Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act,1957 in December,1999 the State Governments have beenempowered to make rules for preventing illegal mining,transportation and storage of minerals and for the purposes connected therewith. Figures of losses suffered due to illegal mining are not centrally maintained.

(d) & (e):The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has reported that they have undertaken fresh exploration for rocksof diamond in several parts of the country including the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.In Golkonda region,the GSI has commenced regional surveys to locate primary source rocksfor diamonds (kimberlite/lamproite) from Field Session(FS)1999-2000. By deploying the modern techniques using the Landsat imagery coupled with aerial photo interpretation, favourable blocks were selected for geological traverses. Detailed multidisciplinary surveys in these blocks brought to light about 20 new lamproites occurring in 8 clusters in Krishna and Nalgonda districts, Andhra Pradesh there by discovering a new lamproite province in Andhra Pradesh. Further work to establish the diamondiferous nature of these small volume bodies will be taken up in due course. The exploration programme to locate lamproite/kimberlite in Khammam, Nalgondaand Krishna districts in Andhra Pradesh is envisaged for the FS 2000-2001. All these bodies would be studied for their diamondiferous nature.